The Impact of the Opioid Crisis on Children: Developing a Web-based Training

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To address the impact of opioids on the development and care of young children the LEND programs in Ohio (Nisonger Center at The Ohio State University and Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center) developed a web-based training for providers of early intervention services and childcare workers. The training addresses many of the complicated issues the opioid crisis requires us to consider:

1. The history and current state of the opioid epidemic,
2. Understanding addiction,
3. The impact of childhood trauma and stress,
4. Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome,
5. Early child development.

There are emerging state and national initiatives aimed at reducing drug abuse and overdose deaths (Ohio Governor’s Cabinet, 2017) and the exponentially increasing number of children in foster care (PCSAO, 2017). However, there has been limited attention on the impact of the opioid crisis on development of young children. Young children (0-5) are disproportionately exposed to the opiate epidemic and traumatic events (PCSAO, 2017). Children with prenatal exposure and opiate-related traumatic stress are being referred into Early Intervention (EI) programs due to behavioral and developmental concerns yet there is little professional development on this topic available for childcare providers in Ohio and nationally. LENDs are well-positioned to address this critical need given the interdisciplinary nature of our work and our focus on maternal child health. The Ohio team consulted with content experts, stakeholders, and community members to inform the training. Video recordings were conducted with foster parents, youth, childcare and EI providers, OBGYN/neonatologists, occupational therapists, and addiction experts.

The training will provide participants with both tools for use in the childcare environment and in early intervention, and community resources for supporting children and parents.

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References
